MINUTES

OF THE

FIFTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

MIAMI ASSOCIATION

OF

REGULAR BAPTISTS,

HELD WITH

WEST LEBANON CHURCH, SEPTEMBER 8th, 9th & 10th, 1854.

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1854.

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Of THE MIAMI ASSOCIATION, held with the WEST LEBANON CHURCH, September 8th, 9th & 10th, 1854.

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1. Introductory Sermon by Eld. MAHLON MORRIS, from John xi. 49, 50, 51, 52.

2. Letters from the several Churches were read, and their Messengers names enrolled, as follows:

CHURCHES.	MESSENGERS.	Rec'd by Baptism.	Rec'd by Letter.	Restored.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total Number.	Money Contrib'd for Minutes.	Time of holding Ch. Meeting.
Elk Creek,	J. Hartley, A. Ball, S. Long, Wm. Potter,	..	..	..	2	..	..	46	1 00	4th
Bethel,	Eld. H. STITES, E. Locke, D. Zentmeyer, J. Parker,	..	..	..	..	..	..	52	2 04	3rd
Todd's Fork,	Wm West	..	..	..	..	..	1	16	95	
Tapscott's M. H.	R. Moses, B. Potter, N. Clark, J. T. Barkalow,	..	..	..	1	..	..	46	2 00	3rd
Mt. Pleasant.	Samuel Lucas, James Baird,	3	..	..	..	1	1	22	1 00	2nd
Dry Fork W. W.	No intelligence	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	....	3rd
Hamilton and Rossville.	I. T. Saunders, E. Miller, J. Timmerman	..	..	..	1	1	1	23	50	1st
Sugar Creek,	M. Allen, H. S. Morgan, A. Stephens, J. Popenoe,	2	4	..	7	2	1	48	2 00	4th
Fairfield,	Eld. L. SOUTHARD, J. Smalley, A. Skillman, A. Sorter	..	1	..	..	..	..	30	1 00	3rd
Winchester,	Eld. T. CHILDERS, T. Wiggens, J. Taylor,	..	3	..	..	1	1	31	1 00	3rd
West Lebanon,	Eld. S. WILLIAMS, S. Drake, J. Corwin, J. Benham,	1	..	..	..	..	2	66	3 00	2nd
Indian Creek,	No intelligence	..	..	..	..	..	..	25	....	2nd
Mercer's Run,	No intelligence	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	....	3rd
Mt. Bethel,	Eld. M. MORRIS, A. White, E. McKee,	..	2	..	1	..	1	33	1 00	2nd
Middle Run,	J. CARMON, J. Buckles, G. Buckles,	2	..	..	..	..	..	23	1 00	2nd
		8	10	..	12	5	8	493	1649	

3. Eld. H. STITES was chosen Moderator, and Eld S. WILLIAMS, Clerk.

4. Ministering brethren, of our faith and order, were invited to a seat in the Association.

5. Correspondence from sister Associations called for:
Scioto—Minutes and Messenger, G. W. Tussing.
Muskingum—No intelligence.

6. Whereas, we are informed that the Clover Association has dropped correspondence with us, *Resolved*, That the name of that Association be dropped from our Minutes.

7. Circular Letter, prepared by J. E. Line, and the Corresponding Letter, prepared by Eld. M. Morris, read and adopted.

8. At the request of brother Howell, from Mill Creek Church, the Mill Creek Church is dropped from our Minutes.

9. Whereas, the Pleasant Run and Muddy Creek Churches have lost their visibility, *Resolved*, That they be dropped from our Minutes.

10. Whereas, the Bethlehem Church did inform us, in their letter of last year, that they would meet with us no more, *Ordered*, That the name of that church be dropped from our Minutes.

11. Appointed Eld. S. Williams and brother S. Drake, to arrange the business for to morrow.

12. Adjourned to meet to-morrow, at 9 o'clock A. M. Prayer by Eld. S. Williams.

Saturday Morning, *September* 9, 1854.

The Association met agreeable to adjournment, and, after praise and prayer by Eld. T. Childers, proceeded to business.

1. Bill of Arrangement received and made the order of the day.

2. Appointed Elders E. Stephens, J. McDonald and L. Southard, to occupy the Stand to-day.

3. Appointed Messengers to Corresponding Associations, as follows:

Scioto—Elders H. Stites, M. Morris, S. Williams, and brother J. Parker.

Muskingum—Elders H. Stites, M. Morris, S. Williams, and brother J. Parker.

4. Whereas, we are informed, that the Mad River and Salem Associations, have dropped correspondence with us, *Resolved*, That we drop their names from our Minutes.

5. Appointed Elders H. Stites and S. Williams, to preach on the Stand to-morrow.

6. Appointed Eld. T. Childers to preach the Introductory Sermon next year, and Eld. L. Southard in case of failure.

7. Appointed Eld. H. Stites to write the Circular for next year.

8. Appointed brother Joseph Taylor to write the Corresponding Letter for next year.

9. Appointed brethren S. Drake, R. Moses, and J. T. Barkalow, to receive the money for Minutes and Correspondence.

10. Appointed the Clerk to superintend the printing and distribution of the Minutes.

11. Appointed the next Association to be held with the Bethel Church, Warren Co., Ohio; to commence at 10 o'clock on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1855.

12. Adjourned to the Stand, to hear preaching.

Eld. H. Stites, *Moderator.*

Eld. S. Williams, *Clerk.*

Times and Places of next Sessions of Correspond. Associations.

Scioto — Walnut Creek Church, Fairfield Co., Ohio; Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1855.

Muskingum — Hopewell Church, Perry Co., Ohio; Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1855.

MINISTERS PRESENT AT THIS SESSION.

H. Stites,	T. Childers,	M. Morris,
L. Southard,	G. W. Tussing,	E. Stephens,
J. McDonald,	B. Rice,	S. Williams.

The business of the Association was transacted in perfect peace and brotherly love. The preaching at this session was harmonious — all of one piece. The congregation on Sunday was very large and attentive.

Thanks be to the God of Israel, for the peace we have enjoyed at this Association.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

To the several Churches composing the Miami Regular Baptist Association:

Beloved Brethren: — The aim in writing, as well as preaching, should undoubtedly be the edification and establishment of the body of Christ. And the counterpart being distraction and confusion, as much as in us lies, we should scrupulously avoid the utterance of such things, either with tongue or pen, as have the latter tendency. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. In the clear and forcible demonstration of his truth we may hope for peace to result in all the churches. Among the prominent points that present themselves in the inspired writings, we are accustomed to select one and endeavor to trace and apprehend something of the perfection of the Author of our Holy Religion, as they may discover themselves in the particular point or subject we have in hand.

Perhaps we may safely say, that Jehovah has not revealed a single attribute of his character, in which his Church, the members of his body, are not immediately interested. Hence, every name and characteristic that is given of Him are of vital interest to His people. It follows, then, that we are not under the necessity of selecting some point or points that appertain especially to us; for we shall not find an attribute of the divine character in the whole revelation he has made of himself, which has not been revealed to them as their portion in Him, He, as their God, in this possessive case, embodying all the perfection of the eternal undivided Godhead, as the inheritance of His Church. The nature and extent of this inheritance, must, of necessity, be at all times and under all circumstances, an absorbing theme. These promises lead to a declaration of divine truth, concerning the Church, which we propose now to contemplate, in which she is spoken of as having the Glory of God. This expression will certainly embrace all that we have intimated above. But, nevertheless, we approach the subject with much diffidence, lest we should tarnish and obscure rather than exhibit and illustrate. What know we, brethren, of God or of Glory? Have we any knowledge or conception of either, only as he has been pleased to develop himself in and reveal himself to, His Church? We think not. And shall we go further and say, that every perfection of the divine nature, every attribute of His character, every member of his mystical body, yea, the, as yet, hidden, unapproachable Glory that invests His great white throne, must ultimately be exhibited and exemplified in his saints? Let us mark the em-

phatic expression: "Having the Glory of God." His Glory, whatever it may be, and how much soever it may transcend our utmost conceptions, will be found here — will lie in full development here. And not only so, but all other glory must be excluded. The complete and perfect disclosure of God to and in His Church, will depend, measurably at least, upon this exclusion of all other Glory of whatever kind. Well, what are we to understand by the term Glory? What idea do we get of God in the use of this term? We understand His glory to consist in those eternal excellencies and untarnished perfections that continually increase in luster by comparison. Among these we may select, for a moment's consideration, his Truth. How intimately connected with the minute and trivial circumstances that can ever occur in this world, (that is, as we view things,) is the development of the truth of God. How slight a circumstance would mar, and thereby destroy the perfection of this Truth; and, consequently, rather than glorify Him, detract from the Divine Glory, no less His Power than His Truth. The development of it depends upon the state in which His Church is placed and what she has to encounter in the world. And the more power which is arrayed against her — the more formidable her foes — the greater the combination of interest, wealth, numbers, zeal, wisdom, talents, and the like, that organize in opposition to her, the greater must consequently be the display of the power of God in her final triumph. The mystery of iniquity, the Man of Sin, with all its power, with all its numbers, with the united arms of ten kingdoms, with all the rage and malice of the Prince of Darkness, will in the end have accomplished no more with regard to the Church of Christ than to exhibit gloriously the Wisdom, Power and Truth of God. For this purpose the Lord has raised up the enemies of His cause and people to power and place, and given them to exercise their wisdom in opposition to His, and array all their forces against His Church, in order to the taking of them in their own craftiness, and a declaration in them of His own eternal Power and Godhead. Or, in other words, he suffers them to use their boasted wisdom and power just to bring about the accomplishment of His own purpose and their own defeat. And if there ever should occur a circumstance in which His cause was not advanced, and from which the good of His children was not deduced, and by which His Word was not accomplished, it would derogate from His perfection and tarnish His Glory. According, therefore, as the declaration of His Wisdom, Power and Truth is continually affected by the most minute circumstances to which we are ever introduced, let us understand that we are brought in contact with these circumstances for the very purpose that a revenue of glory may be derived from them, unnumbered and innumerable events continuing through all coming time to exemplify the divine attributes with new and additional luster. The Redeemer's Kingdom, moreover, will be composed of just

such materials, and receive and enjoy just such gifts, as shall tend to cut off all glorying in the flesh, and sever and sunder from Zion all other glory, that she shall in verity have the Glory of God, and His alone.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Miami Regular Baptist Association to her Sister Associations with whom she corresponds :

Beloved Brethren:—We send this our Annual Epistle, to cement the bonds that unite us, and to sustain the correspondence which has been so pleasant and profitable to us, rather than with the expectation of communicating anything relating to our body interesting.

We have not been blessed with God's peculiar favors, in that we have not had such an increase of members in our churches as in years gone by. But, on the contrary, as you may see by our Minutes, many of our churches have decreased in numbers; notwithstanding, we have not lost our confidence in our Savior, but trust that His hand is not so shortened that He cannot save, but trust that He, in His own time, will multiply peculiar blessings to His people, for His own arm hath brought salvation. His own hand likewise inflicteth chastisement on his disobedient children.

Dear Brethren: We would recommend a close investigation of the Scriptures and a careful obedience to the commands of our Lord and Master, which, if practiced more, would tend to unite us closer in the bonds of fellowship, and thereby prevent discord. Brethren, we should watch as well as pray, for we are in continual danger of falling into error; on one hand Arminianism with all its various superstitions, and on the other deep mysteries, merely established in inferences. Let us keep clear of every thing which we have not a "Thus saith the Lord" for, in plain words.

We have been much delighted by the presence of your Messengers, and rejoice to hear that some are zealous in contending for the purity of the faith once delivered to the saints. We still solicit a continuance of your correspondence, and may the King of Zion watch over you, direct your ways in wisdom, and give us dispositions to obey his commands.

Our next Association will meet (the Lord willing,) with the Bethel Church, Warren Co., Ohio, at 10 o'clock A. M., on Friday before the Second Sunday in September, 1855.

Eld. H. Stites, *Moderator.*

Eld. S. Williams, *Clerk.*